



Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs

Tony Evers, Governor | Mary M. Kolar, Secretary

July 28, 2020

Dear Veterans Home at Union Grove Community:

I hope that this latest update finds you and your family and friends healthy.

As you are aware, COVID-19 remains in our communities, remains very contagious, and puts people in Wisconsin at-risk of getting sick, particularly those in long-term care facilities. It is in this atmosphere that I am today compelled to report that a nurse who cares for veterans at our Home has tested positive for coronavirus. While the nurse is not one of our employees, we do contract to have regular, specific services to certain Members provided by this individual. This individual last provided services at our Home the week of July 12. We have notified those who were in contact with the nurse, but in the interest of transparency I wanted to share this information more broadly. We are monitoring exposed Members for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and will continue to do so for the remainder of the 14-day incubation period; presently none are showing symptoms.

I would like to thank those of you who submitted comments to us on the draft visitation plan that I had shared in my last update letter. We have reviewed your comments and are hopeful that we will be able to find a way to make visits possible again in a way that does not risk the health of our Members and staff. As I said in that update, allowing visits will be completely dependent on COVID-19's status.

We are not immune from what is happening in the surrounding community. According to the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, on July 22, counties with the highest COVID-19 case rates per capita included Iron, Milwaukee, Brown, and Racine. The counties with the most significant upward trends included Lincoln and Racine.

Given the contact that Members have had with a nurse who has tested positive for coronavirus and watching data about COVID-19 in our community, we are not able to allow visits to begin at this time. Please understand that we are committed to bringing us together again, but we are equally committed to not putting any Member or staff at risk. In the meantime, we will finalize the visitation plan based on your feedback and let you know as soon as it goes into effect so we may begin those visits.

As a reminder, the rules of visiting are currently; window visits, dropping off supplies at the Boland Hall vestibule for staff to take to Members and tele/iPad visits. Our diligence at Union Grove has put us in a position where we are fortunate to have had no Members test positive for COVID-19, but disregard could easily change that. I think we can all agree that no one wants harm to come to any staff or Members.

Thank you all again for your patience and understanding.

Homes Division Administrator, WDVA